194 Hungarian spelling is more phonetic than English. This is absolutely true of vowels where ¨ over a letter indicates quality and ´ and ˚ indicate length but, in the case of a and e, also a different quality. The spelling of consonants presents somewhat more difficulty. In the process of suffixation and word-composition, consonant clusters may develop, resulting in an internal sandhi that is not marked by conventional spelling and which creates a discrepancy between sound and conventional orthographical representation. (For the internal sandhi see Robert A. Hall, Jr., Hungarian Grammar. Language Monograph No. 21, Supplement to Language, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 19-20. Baltimore, 1944.)

193 From the point of view of morphology, the difference between Hungarian and English is rather striking. The morphological variations are expressed in Hungarian almost entirely by means of suffixes and partly of postpositions—a trait common to all Finno-Ugric languages. Prepositions are wholly unknown.

Another aspect common to the Finno-Ugric languages is that they completely ignore gender. Accordingly, Hungarian has just one declension for its substantives, with a host of suffixes by the addition of which over twenty cases may be formed. There is a plural suffix, possessive suffixes

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and twenty relational suffixes, the functions of which correspond roughly to those of the English prepositions. These suffixes are joined to the stem in this order: plural-possessive-relational. Ex.: ház 'house,' házak 'houses,' házakban 'in the houses,' házam 'my house,' házamban 'in my house.' The singleness of the declension does not exclude the existence of different types of nouns that change their stems while being inflected. There are also certain classes of nouns which take binding vowels between the stem and the suffix or between two consecutive suffixes.

The numerous relational noun suffixes may, in turn, be inflected in order to form relations of pronouns. Taking, for instance, the suffix -ban/-ben 'in' previously used, we may form bennem 'in me,' bennünk 'in us,' etc.

The Hungarian conjugational system is also much less varied than, e.g., that of the Romance languages. There are only four tenses: present, preterit, imperative-subjunctive and conditional-optative. The present tense or the auxiliary for both express futurity. There is no passive voice in modern Hungarian usage.

The single conjugation of the Hungarian verbs has a large set of verbal suffixes which describe (a) the tense and (b) the person acting, without making use of personal pronouns, as in adok 'I give,' adunk 'we

give,' etc. Some suffixes (c) refer to the person acted upon, as in adlak 'I give thee' or adom 'I give it,' as opposed to the mere adok 'I give.' The last is usually called the objective or definite form of the verb and can be found in all the Ugric languages and in Mordvin.

The order of particles in a conjugated verb is: stem-tense sign-personal ending. Ex : ad 'he gives' (the pres. 3rd pers. sing. is the same as the stem), adna 'he would give,' adnának 'they would give.'

Like nouns, the inflected verbs also have stem variations of different types. The non-finite verb forms include the infinitive, three participles and two gerunds.

The number of irregular verbs and defectives is small. The verb 'to have' is commonly expressed by van 'there is.' Thus van házam 'I have a house,' literally 'there is a house-my.'

The Hungarian phrase structure shows little disagreement with English. The order "attribute-head" prevails in it, with the former remaining unchanged even when it refers to a head declined. Ex.: kedves ember 'a nice person,' kedves emberek 'nice people.' In possessive constructions the order possessor-possession is the rule, as in the English genitival word order. On the other hand, if the attribute is an expression of quantity, the following noun remains in the singular, as katona 'soldier,'

193 katonák 'soldiers,' but öt katona 'five soldiers' and sok katona 'many soldiers.'

Hungarians often vaunt the expressiveness of their tongue. Their claims seem to be justified, at least as far as action words are concerned. Indeed, word-formation in Hungarian is tooled with several hundred living suffixes and prefixes, especially in the line of verbs deriving from other verbs or from substantives. The derivative verb suffixes conveying shades of meanings to the original action word may be grouped as follows: potential, causative, reflexive, frequentative or iterative, instantaneous and inchoative suffixes. Within most of these groups several different suffixes represent secondary nuances. Examples with the iteratives -gat and -kél and the prefix fel- 'up, upon.': ír 'he writes,' irogat 'he writes continuously or repeatedly,' irkál 'he scribbles,' felirkál 'he scribbles upon.'

Frequentatives and instantaneous suffixes are especially rich in variants. Moreover, the suffixes of different groups may be combined, thus giving within a single verb a concise description of the action to be expressed, e.g. irkáltathat 'he may have someone scribble' (iterative-causative-potential).

The compounding of words and the sentence structure show but a few peculiarities. Hungarian, for instance, knows no sequence of tenses, i.e.

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the action expressed by a subordinate clause is related in time to the speaker and not to the action of the main clause, e.g. azt hallottam, hogy beteg 'I heard he is sick.' Hungarian also omits van and vannak ('is' and 'are') in equational sentences. Ex.: A ház szép 'the house [is] beautiful' A házak szépek 'the houses [are] beautiful.'

The Hungarian word order is almost as flexible as that of the classical languages and offers thereby the same rhetorical advantages.

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Like French or German, Hungarian differentiates between polite and familiar speech. The pronouns corresponding to vous or sie are maga-maguk, ön-önök, or kend-kendek; those corresponding to tu and du are te and ti. The use of these pronouns and of the corresponding verb forms varies between city and country. In the cities, the familiar form is used among close relatives, good friends, immediate associates at work, and with children; the polite form is to be used with people of age or prestige and among strangers. In the country, the polite form is restricted within the family and among good friends; it is also used when speaking to strangers of authority; the familiar forms are used among children and teenagers, and among casual acquaintances if the person spoken to is younger or obviously on a lower social level.